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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAKU 000679

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KDEM](#) [KJUS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [AJ](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF JAILED
FORMER MINISTER FARHAD ALIYEV

REF: A. BAKU 481
[1](#)B. BAKU 596

Classified By: Ambassador Anne E. Derse per 1.4(b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) On July 10 the Ambassador met with Jamil Hasanli, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Committee Defending the Rights of Farhad Aliyev, and Elton Guliyev, a lawyer for Farhad Aliyev. Hasanli began the meeting with a discussion of the difficult situation facing journalists in Azerbaijan. Hasanli explained that he has been acting as a public defender for Agil Khalil, a journalist beaten and then stabbed during the course of reporting a corruption story (ref a). Hasanli has called both the Border Service and the Prosecutor General's office, but has not found a legal answer as to why Khalil was prevented from leaving the country (ref b). Guliyev further explained that he believes Khalil was attacked because he would not take a bribe to remain quiet regarding illegal tree cutting he witnessed, and that without the diplomatic community's public intervention, Khalil would have been killed. Hasanli stressed that the media in Azerbaijan needs to be protected, and asked for continued USG help in securing the release of three journalists currently imprisoned.

STATUS OF FARHAD ALIYEV APPEALS

[1](#)2. (C) Hasanli then turned the discussion towards the ongoing appeal of Farhad Aliyev and Rafig Aliyev's convictions on corruption charges. Hasanli explained that they had hoped the appeal would fix the violations of the defendants, rights which happened during the first trial, but that these hopes have not been realized. Guliyev further explained that the appeals court would not accept a single piece of evidence that he had put forth and did not allow Guliyev and his team sufficient time to prepare the case. The verdict in this appeal is expected on July 14 or 15. Guliyev stated, however, that since the appeal has not been conducted fairly, that they will take the case to the European Court for Human Rights (ECHR). Guliyev stated that the legal team has already filed a case with the ECHR regarding the pre-trial detention of Farhad Aliyev, and the ECHR has accepted this case. Hasanli then explained that these appeals will be useless, however, if Aliyev does not receive proper medical treatment for his heart condition, as he will then die before the ECHR has time to deliver a verdict.

[1](#)3. (C) Hasanli ended the meeting by asking for USG help on two fronts. He would like U.S. Embassy to help ensure that President Ilham Aliyev receives accurate information about

this case, as Hasanli is convinced that people around the President are preventing the truth from reaching him. He also asked the USG to press the GOAJ to conduct a fair trial for Farhad Aliyev, and for proper medical care during this trial period. The Ambassador replied that the United States will continue to advocate for due process for Farhad Aliyev as it does for all Azerbaijani citizens, as well as for proper medical treatment for people in detention.

COMMENT

¶4. (C) While Hasanli and Guliyev's points regarding Aliyev's trial are similar to ones they have previously raised with the Ambassador, their involvement in media freedom issues is new, and yet another sign of the growing recognition of press freedom problems in Azerbaijan.
DERSE